

BILLA'S SMOCK

- Feel good the northern way -

The Journey Begins

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SMOCKS are hand-woven materials well-cut in sizes to fit the wearers, depending on the occasion. It was basically worn in the three northern regions of the country but has now become a national attire at funerals, durbars and even political rallies.

There are male and female designs worn by chiefs, elders and the noble. Until recently, the smock was the preserve of men. The type of smock worn by commoners could be distinguished since they were of a smaller size and of lower quality.

In Dagare language, the smock is called Dagakparu, while the female version is called Pog-Dogakparu meaning Dagarti shirt and woman's Dagarti shirt respectively.



[_ \(https://billasmock.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/ca63a-img_20170629_154204-2.jpg\)](https://billasmock.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/ca63a-img_20170629_154204-2.jpg)

The female smocks have the usual sac-style with a big pocket on the chest, designed with feminine features to expose their beauty and charm. The space in front of the pocket down to the navel is embroidered. The dress is often sleeveless and covers up to the knee. There is always a headgear of the same material to match this elaborate design.

Male smocks may have sleeves or be sleeveless.



Represent your culture in style



GONJA SMOCK

According to Dagger ethno-psychology and anthropology, the colours in smocks signify blood, caution, danger and other alarming signals. They also denote an outgoing personality.

Orange signifies riches while yellow, which is also the colour of the dawadawa fruit, stands for joy and wealth.

Blue, according to tradition, is an indication of heavy rains.

White is the colour of purity and the departed souls who are believed to re-visit their communities or homes.

Indigo is taken for thick clouds, while the Wala people call the violent colour Muoni. This is the colour of the Wala nobility. The Dagaaba association brown with the soil or earth and regard it as mysterious, fearful, deathly, evil or the unknown. Black is thought to resemble darkness, while green is the colour associated with crops, serenity and life.

The type of smock worn indicates the kind of situation the wearer finds himself in. The weaving and production of smocks is sustained in the three northern regions because of the available raw material – cotton, which is produced on the large scale in the northern sector of the country. Women also contribute to the smock industry through the spinning of cotton to produce good yarns.

The cost of producing smocks is low. There is virtually no need to import any heavy machinery to produce smocks in the three northern regions since everything can be done manually with excellent results.



GONJA SMOCK

These industries, apart from producing costumes and traditional dresses offer employment to a sizeable number of young men in the three northern regions of Ghana.

The smocks have very great significance in the country. They are used for grand durbars, church services, funerals and other serious occasions.

They are outstanding in quality and quantity and can serve as a foreign exchange earner to meet the national call for the diversification of the traditional export sector.

The production of smocks in large quantities will certainly provide revenue for the Ghanaian economy. .

**The writer is the Public Relations Officer of the
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source

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